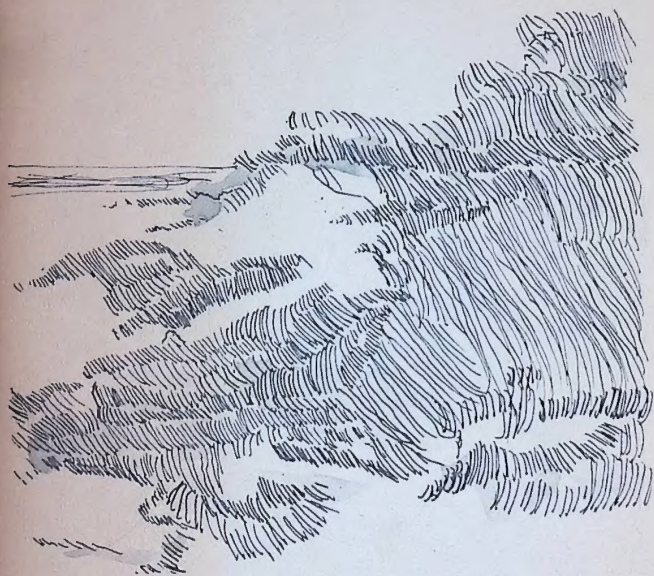


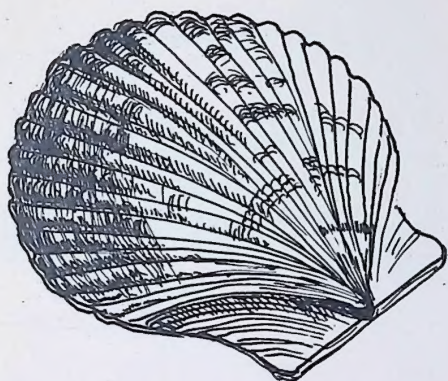
In Memory Of A Place ...
Anna Maria Island, Florida



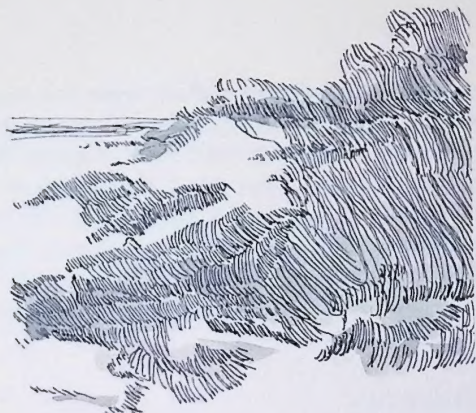
by
A. Neville Barry



10-
ysuic



In Memory Of A Place ...
Anna Maria Island
Florida



by
A. Neville Barry
Illustrations by Lucille Blankenship

Copyright © 1980, by
A. Neville Barry
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
Manufactured in the United States of America

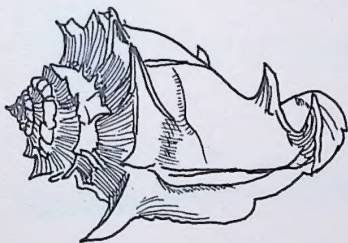
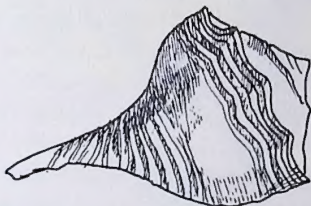
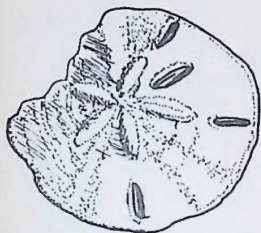
These seascapes are dedicated to three dearly and deeply loved persons. They are Dolly Anderson and her two daughters, Lucille Blankenship and Corrine McClure. They are special and because of that this is dedicated to them. Memory of them and my island is my mainstay. The little booklet about the sea while in the shadow of the Sandia Mountains, Albuquerque, New Mexico, has been written with "A light that illumines my spiritual eye and inspires my pen as I write."

¹*Poems, Mary Baker Eddy*

*"O, it's a snug little island!
A right little, tight little island!"*

*- Thomas Dibdin,
"The Snug Little Island"*

*There is a legend held about
islands: once you set foot on
an island, you must always come
back again and again and
forever...*



Ah, the seashells! The sands are heaped high with these treasures....



Come with me and see the sea!

Sea Eyes

Come with me and see the sea! Let's use our sea eyes, become sea-attuned, and yearn to learn what the sea teaches. Let's stand still at the seashore, consider its sands and sounds and sights which totally refines, which totally takes over, which totally inspirits. Let's do some soul-searching in the solitude, a grand game to play, and let the sea teach us and stretch us and emancipate us. Let us find our own wisdom for the way and let us find it by the sea for it does have a wisdom to give. Let the sea be for us "the nature of a blessing, a baptism, a rebirth to the beauty and wonder of the world."¹ Let us find our gift from the sea as did another and as she did "find again some of the joy in the now, some of the peace in the here, some of the love in me and thee which go to make up the kindgom of heaven on earth."²

There is a solace and a succor about the sea. Come with me and see the sea!

^{1,2} *"Gift From The Sea", Anne Morrow Lindbergh*

Seascape

Blue sky is overhead and blue sea is below and beautiful birds are bending on the breeze winging over the waves. Sands are shimmering in the sun and seashell treasures are to be had. There are sounds of crashing combers and at other times gentle lapping ebb tides and always birdsong of shore birds fill the air. Seashells! Ah, the seashells! The sands are heaped high with these treasures. These will be shucked off now no longer wanted or needed, little armor coats once belonging to little sea creatures and now becoming treasures to collect. Seagulls and pelicans command the sky, a joy to behold in their fanciful flight, the so precious sandpipers scurry in orderly fashion strutting their stuff on the sandy beach. The gulls dance the dipsy-doodle in the sky, the pelicans divebomb for fish or float like buoys holding great conclaves acrost the waves, and the sappy little sandpipers, little island imps, jog up and down the beach always in big bunches appearing much like a chorus line in some form of pecking order. All these lovely shorebirds grace the scene with their presence and watching them can be an unending and rewarding pasttime.

This is a seascape.



The gulls dance the dipsy-doodle in the sky ...

Sea Oats

I think that I shall never see anything prettier than these lovely things bending, bending, bending but not bent in the breeze. Great clumps there are here, there, everywhere gracing the sand dunes where they grow. How much they look like wheat. I am so taken by the resemblance and am grateful that they are not needed as a staff of life but only needed, and how needed, for their beauty. Alas, they are not allowed to be picked for in picking they would denude the lovely shore scene. No, they must remain inviolate where they grow and though I am loathe to leave them where they are as I covet a big bouquet of them, I think how really nice that this is so that they be allowed to bless other beholders with their beauty who love them as do I. Take away the lovely graceful fully blooming sea oats from off my island beach and it would be an act of despoiling to be sure and, moreover, only half a beach at that. No, these lovely things belong at the beach along with other beach beauties, the birds, the waves, the sands, and other lovely, lovely things of the sea. So as I pass them along my beach walks I wing them a little prayer. "Grow in peace."



these lovely things bending, bending, bending ...

A Close Encounter

An Encounter with Jonathan Livingston Seagull ...

Looking up from my book, "Jonathan Livingston Seagull," which I had taken to my beach to read, I looked up at a gull-studded sky, a sky made lovelier by their presence. I watched in wonder these graceful gulls gliding merrily through the air and thought, oh, to be able to do that!

One gull in particular arrested my attention and caught my fancy. Jonathan himself perhaps! He was soaring serenely in his sky solitude and, while I really didn't want to interrupt him in his flight games preferring instead to simply behold him, some questions formed begging to be asked. How nice if we could meet so I could ask them! I called out to him, "Jonathan, wait for me, take me with you." He flew far out to sea but did come back as if summoned and tarried at my side for a bit. The talk between us went something like this.

"Well, Jonathan, I read your book and loved it and you for telling it. I cannot fly like you and that is my misfortune. But I can behold you and be blessed by beholding and this I will do. Would you tell and teach me something of your flight philosophy for as I see it to fly is emancipation? I will listen now to what you have to say for you have the wisdom to impart. You will find me eager and receptive to learn.

From the "Law of the Great Gull, the Law that is" you had this to say. "Who is more responsible than a gull who finds and follows a meaning, a higher purpose of life? You have the freedom to be yourself, your true self, here and now, and nothing can stand in your way."

I pondered this and about what it all meant. Why it meant emancipation didn't it? Freedom from all that would frighten, limit, vex, and perplex. That's what you learned yourself and exclaimed. "Why, that's true! I am a perfect, unlimited gull!"³ And then again when proving it you exultantly declared, "IT WORKS!!"⁴ So let fearful, limiting thoughts be gone, let them take flight! Of course, that was what it all meant. I myself could not take wing but my thoughts could. They could do my flying for me and soar and sing on lifted wing. The very thought emancipates!

"Thank you, thanks a lot little gull friend, Jonathan, for sharing your gull philosophy and expressing your joie de vivre. I'll not forget you, our encounter, and your message of meaning. It has brought comfort and content."

It was now time for us both to be going on our appointed rounds -- for Jonathan to continue his mastery of freedom through flight and I to find help and hope and healing from the encounter.

So as you climb into your sky with majesty and grace, with command and dominion, hear me say to you, "thank you for coming joyful little Jonathan and vaya con Dios, vaya con Dios."

And a P.S. It seems all this brought the following to mind. "Fixing your gaze on the realities supernal, you will rise to the spiritual consciousness of being, even as the bird which has burst from its egg and preens its wings for a skyward flight."⁵

^{1,2,3,4} "Jonathan Livingston Seagull", Richard Bach;

⁵ "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures." Mary Baker Eddy

Cats Paws

Keepsakes from Little Missy, 1975-1979

*A little shell is all it is,
A little shell looking for all the world
like my Little Missy's paw ...*

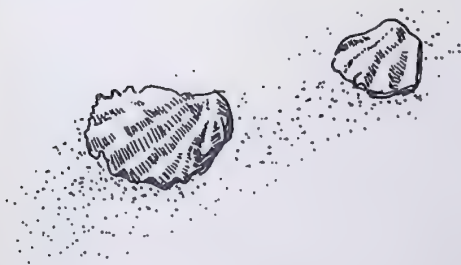
*I pick it up
and many more just like it
to take home, place around, to remember ...*

*I don't need the hurtful reminder
but I want to remember
a one perfect thing that once was ...*

*Beloved Little Missy
of flower face,
Soft paws, gentle tread ...*

*The collection of little shell feet
add up, become countless,
recalling to me her soft footfalls ...*

*These little cat paw shells
won't let me forget you, Missy —
you live in Life ...*





A seashore sunset held me spellbound ...

Wings Of The Morning

For Phyllis, My Friend Mentioned Here

Color the sky faintly pink with the sun's early glow, throw in white fluffy scudding clouds, add graceful seagulls majestic in their flight overhead, see an unpeopled beach, and place two girls in the scene sitting at water's edge with their prayer books contemplating it all. When done visualizing the scenario be still and listen. Listen to the silence. Yes, silence can be heard. In this silence by the sea on this glorious early morning my friend and I read together in the prayerbook, "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."¹ Its promise was enough to know and knowing it we left our almost holy beach and went home leaving the glory of the Gulf to God and the gulls, two girls who took its measure and were the better for it.

¹ Psalm 139:9-10



Going To A Sunset

They come from everywhere and suddenly it is a people explosion, all kinds of people, and all of them happy. What is happening and where are they all going? To a sunset! Yes, they really are going to a sunset! It's called that down here on Anna Maria Island. Everyone is in mutual consent that it is easily the most important event of the day. Let me tell you about these sunsets, these glories of the Gulf. They are absolutely unforgettable sights and to miss one is regrettable.

Describe a sunset you say? Very well, and as best I can. A sunset is a wonder. A sunset is born and dies all in the space of a brief interval. A sunset never grows old. It is the youngest thing there is anywhere, its life expectancy so terribly short. A sunset begins way out somewhere in the majesty of space, lives for the briefest moment only, hurls itself upon the sky painting an incredible sight, and then just as suddenly is no more. Its destiny to fulfill is only a fleeting beauty to impart to all who dwell below and then is doomed to die. It has spent itself well in the sky. There will be other sunsets but this particular one will be no more.

The loving Creator, He it is that colors our sky with sunsets. Sunset wonders are His to bestow and ours to behold and if we come away from watching our sunsets appropriately awed and humbled by them then our time of watching them will have been time well spent and we will have had ennobling experiences. This then will be our wisdom found and taken at the time the sun sets. Have I described a sunset well? Probably not but then how can a perfect thing be described anyhow?

Suddenly it is all over, the sun has gone and so have all the people. Both will be back tomorrow evening and they will remember that they have an engagement then and will have every evening during their sojourn at the sea. They will be busy at this time and can be found only at the beach for they have gone to a sunset.

So the sun has set and everyone solemnly goes home leaving the beach once again unpeopled. Only the shore birds remain and the splendor of it all and the words of the Navajo come to mind, "In beauty it is finished."

A Sea Sunset

A seashore sunset held me spellbound and in fascinated wonder I watched it spend itself before me. It was the sheer beauty of the thing, a splendid and a dazzling spectacle, and I could not remember ever seeing anything as lovely before. I was a spectator gazing over the shimmering sands that led to the gorgeous Gulf and watched in awe as Mother Nature put on one of her unforgettable pageants of perfection. I watched grandeur and glory unfold before my very eyes. This sunset this night was in a class by itself and had a splendor all its own. The sky was cloudless and clear, the sea calm. The sunset's glow came on in the form of overall illumination that seemed to light up the sky for miles around shining on everything with a shine all its own. Its lingering flashes of light seemed to be washing the world clean again. As I watched this spectacle play itself out in front of me for what seemed to be forever I could not remember anything to match or surpass its drawing power. It exalted and uplifted me as nothing before had ever done. It was an altogether indescribably beautiful event and had occurred at the end of one of those halcyon days the memory of which lingers yet. When darkness overtook at last it was with regret that I closed my eyes on this glory of the Gulf at this day's end I will remember always ...

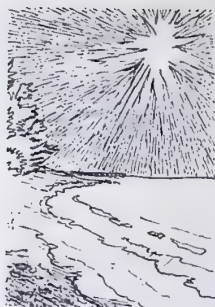


O, Little Town of Anna Maria

Christmas Eve

O, little town of Anna Maria, how still I see thee lying out there with water and waves quiet at your feet while above you and my little island the silent Christmas star shines down. And in thy dark streets shineth the shimmering lights of Christmas trees from out little beach houses and, upon dark beaches, the everlasting lights of a star-studded sky. How silently, how silently the gentle waves are this night, not crashing combers, as if aware of this being a holy night and that all things need to be especially quiet because of it. Even the shorebirds, my friends the gulls by the sea and the doves in my woods, are cognizant of it and are silent. In the new morning of Christmas they will once again be heard and their birdsong this day will be carols. Walking the dark and so silent beach this night while contemplating Christmas I look up at the sky and a Christmas sky it is with all stars in it proclaiming the holy birth. On Christmas morn, tomorrow, all will join in a diapason of song-- the sea and sky, the waves and winds, the stars and birds, and one lone sojourner by the sea, myself -- but for now quietness has settled upon us all, an appropriate quietness, a time for earth and sky and sea and all things therein to be quiet, "a time for staying still" in the words of the Indian, and where this quietness is, "where meekness will receive him, still, the dear Christ enters in."¹ Bird and wave and star and sea and sky and I know this and in the knowing "Christmas comes once more."²

^{1,2} "O, Little Town of Bethlehem," Phillips Brooks





your palms heavy with fruit ...

My Beautiful Isle of Somewhere

It has a name and is somewhere. No, not Hawaii, not Samoa, not Bermuda. Maybe the above words from an old popular song were meant to describe some tropical South Seas paradise, I don't know. I prefer to have them recall for me Anna Maria Island on the Gulf Coast of Florida.

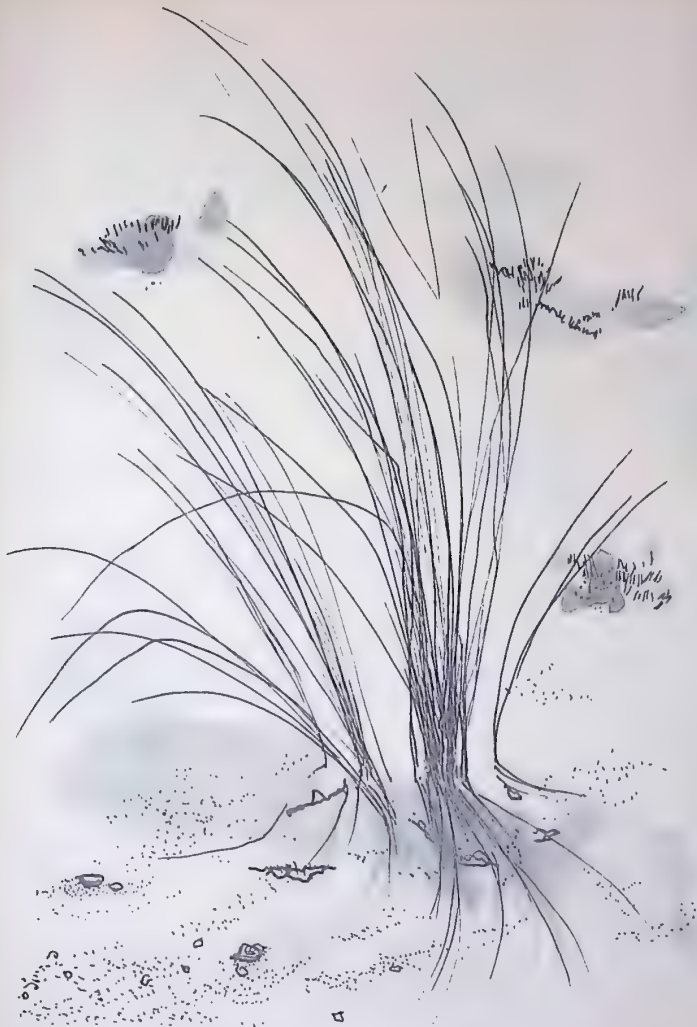
Dear little lovely island Anna Maria, how you do entice, engage, enchant one. There's no getting away from you. Two thousand, one-hundred and fifty-one miles away from my little beach house on North Shore Drive here in New Mexico has not caused memory of you to dim or love for you to lapse. Reminders of you come on strong, continue to influence, remain to bless. What is there about you, my little loved island? Oh, I know the answers all right. Your place in the sun is assured -- your flowers so fair, your sun-dappled skies, your shimmering sands, your palms heavy with fruit, your treasure trove of seashells, your beaches that wipe out all competition with their beauty, your people friendly -- ah, my dearly loved ones there and they know their names! During my sojourn by the sea I learned a wisdom for the way, island insights. You, my island gave them to me and I thank you. . 7

Deeply loved, dearly missed, dear beautiful isle of somewhere, Anna Maria, I am beholden to you and memory of you is my mainstay.

A Declaration of Promise

Everything must have an ending. Not that inspiration fails to flow but that it is suitable to conclude a thing. A painter finishes up and a writer winds up and so it is. My little seascapes have run their course with joy and my love letter to my lovely little island, Anna Maria, is done -- for now. There will always be more loving things to think, say, and write about my island and they will be another time. I lived but a brief while on my island, experienced some magical experiences, moved among some magical people, and my island, sharing because caring, causes me to rejoice evermore that such a magical place can be. And because of that I know that I can go back again, and indeed will, that I shall return to my beautiful isle of somewhere, Anna Maria, Florida ...





Everything must have an ending ...



*"And why do thoughts about the sea
Persist in coming to my mind?"*

*From "Poems by Zhivago" from 'Doctor
Zhivago', Boris Pasternak*



Cover designs and illustrations
by
Lucille Blankenship



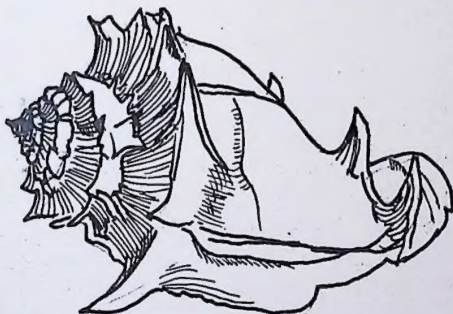
Books By The Author

"Land Of The Light"

"A Dream So Dear"

"Gentle On My Mind"

"A Walk With Beauty"



A. NEVILLE BARRY, Poet, essayist, and student of history, has published four previous books. *LAND OF THE LIGHT* was written about Louisiana and the Confederate period. *A DREAM SO DEAR* covers Virginia, the Colonial and Confederate times. *GENTLE ON MY MIND* is a collection of essays and poetry. *A WALK WITH BEAUTY* is a portrayal of New Mexico and the Rio Grande Pueblo Indians. It is a tribute to the land in poetry and prose. Her latest, this book, *IN MEMORY OF A PLACE*, is her tribute to the lovely little island of Anna Maria in Florida. Her artist is Lucille Blankenship, an eminent watercolorist.



LUCILLE BLANKENSHIP, a Florida artist, specializes in watercolor painting. She teaches watercolor and drawing at Manatee Junior College in Bradenton, Florida where she helped originate a Community Service art program. Her works can be seen at her studio and at Green Genie Gallery both on Old Main Street in Bradenton, at the Art League of Manatee County where she is a director, and at Pictures By The Sea Art Gallery in Anna Maria, Florida. Lucille has attended the Ringling School of Art summer art program for high school students, has majored in art at The Principia College in Illinois, and has ~~had~~ studied at the Maryland Institute of Art in Baltimore, Maryland, Southern Illinois, University of Mexico, and the University of South Florida. She has taken art awards and has had several shows in Pensacola, Fort Lauderdale, and Bradenton. She lives in Palmetto, Florida.